

CIA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

~~RELEASE IN FULL~~

AS SANITIZED

10 March 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. Jeremy Gunn, Esq.
Executive Director, ARRB

FROM: J. Barry Harrelson
Senior Reviewer, HRP

SUBJECT: ARRB Request No. CIA-IR-36, For Information
On Processing of Incoming Cables

1. The following and the attachment are responsive to subject request. The attachment is an extract of the pertinent text from a memorandum provided by the Directorate of Operations.

2. If you have any questions concerning this response, please advise.


J. Barry Harrelson

Att.

ATTACHMENT TO 10 MARCH 1998 MEMORANDUM RE: CIA-IR-36

1. Per the Review Board staff's request the following is a brief explanation of how the Directorate of Operations (DO) processed cables in the 1963/1964 time-frame. As we are unable to locate any definitive records on the subject, and in all probability none ever existed, the information provided is based solely on the memory of DO officers familiar with procedures in place at the time.

2. Each area division in the DO maintained and staffed its own registry. Although each registry was configured to meet each division's unique requirements, there were common functions performed by all the registries to include: collecting, sorting, and delivering of incoming cables; maintenance of incoming and outgoing cable "chronos"; collecting and delivering of incoming and outgoing pouch material; and the issuance and maintenance of "pseudo and alias" card files.

3. To the specific question regarding processing of cables, on a daily basis, usually six day per week, each registry collected its incoming cable traffic from a central processing point, called the Cable Secretariat, an office within the Office of the Director prior to its transfer to the Office of Communications, Directorate of Support in February 1972. The incoming cables were then sorted by registry personnel according to pre-defined guidelines. These guidelines were unique to each division and were frequently altered to meet changing operational requirements. Sorted cables were then delivered to specific operational/area desks. A "chrono" copy of each was maintained, on a temporary basis, usually for 90 days and then destroyed.

4. Outgoing cables were created and coordinated by appropriate operational/area desks and usually released by the chief of the division or a designated releasing officer. "Released" cables were then hand delivered or sent by pneumatic tube system (a system long ago dismantled from the original Headquarters building) to Cable Secretariat for processing into the Agency's communication network. "Chrono" copies of outgoing cables were forwarded to the registry for a 90 day hold and then destroyed.

5. It is important to note that the cable scenario outlined here is general in nature and that throughout their existence registries and their procedures were frequently altered until the registry system as described above was eliminated in the mid-1980's.

~~ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

From the Desk of Mary Lou Cummings
DCI/IRO -39058

NOTE FOR: J. Barry Harrelson
FROM: Mary Lou Cummings
OFFICE: DCI/IRO
DATE: 03/24/98 10:37:06 AM
SUBJECT: ARRB Request No. CIA-IR-36, For Information on Release of Incoming Cables.

In response to your facsimile of 19 March, the DCI area/IRO concurs in your decision to release your memo of 10 March with attachment to the AARB.

CC:
Sent on 24 March 1998 at 10:37:06 AM

~~ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY~~